

1576 425.106
A
BRIEF NARRATIVE

Of the Proceedings of Syn. 7 07 17

Doctor Parr,

And some of the Parishioners of *Mary Magda'len-
Parish* in the County of SURREY.

Against certain People called *Quakers*, Inhabitants of the
said Parish, for not Paying and Complying with an illegal Tax,
and under pretence of Repairing their Church.

Showing how some of the said people did endeavour (as of right belongs to them
by English Law) to defend themselves from the Rigor and Cruelty of the Eccle-
siastical Courts about the same, by seeking to gain a Prohibition to stop the Pro-
ceedings in the Bishop's Court, and to bring their Unlawful & Illegal Imposition
of a Tax upon the said Parish to trial at Common Law: and by what Means they
have been prevented therein.

And to EXHORTORY REPREHENSION upon the whole.

Publishing herein a Mistranscribing concerning the said people, who are and
may be more provoked, as that they in Equity, Sincerity and Self-moderation
have refused to pay towards the said Rate and assessment a Charge to the said Parish.
Whereas, though the Cause at first endued but in defend themselves was, to keep
their Consciences void of Offence to God and Man (To God, in not yielding
to Repair in idle Temples; for so they believe it to be: To Man, in that their
Proceeding was contrary to a well-known Law being) And having done
their duty in trying the Court of Judgement, and having Liberty in the
Face of Judgement, and the Cause of the poor distressed, they are clear in their
Consciences, and can leave their Cause to God, and lie down in Peace and Good
will to all men. But the growing Wound, and after a day will fall upon the
Wicked in the Day of Judgment.

By the way, I have under the Seal the Place of Judgement, and the
Place of Judgment, and the Place of Judgment, and the Place of Judgment.

Printed in the Year 1677.

TRIST HARRATIVE

of the Proceedings of the

Doctor Pitt

and under presence of the

and under presence of the

and under presence of the

Also an EXHORTORY REPRESENTATION upon the whole

and under presence of the

52:09

and under presence of the

To the Reader.

Friend,

Thou mayst understand, we live in a Nation whose Laws and constituted Government excels most Nations in the World, being very tender and careful in defence of its Inhabitants Liberties, Persons, Estates and Lives from the wills and Arbitrary Power of Lawless unreasonable Men; and every English man hath a Birth right and Inheritance in this Law; and it is the Just Interest of every honest man, to endeavour to keep up this Standard and Bulwark of Property, Lives and Liberties against all that would invade them, or attempt to rob and spoil them of either.

'Tis true, there is much Failure and Corruption in the Executive Part of this well framed law and government, & there is so much Partiality, Self-interest and Iniquity got into the Place and Seat of Judgement, that many times the clear Stream and Current of Justice and Equity is stopped, defiled and corrupted, and it's a very hard thing for a poor man, who is oppressed and abused by his Neighbour, to get Relief, but this is not to be attributed to the Law, but to the Abusers and Corruptors of it, whose work is to pervert the End of all good Law and Government; which is to be a Terror to the Evil-doers, and a Praise to them that do well; where-ever this just End is not answered, such do not rule nor judge for God, let them pretend what they will, but

but are Contemners, Despisers and Perverters of the Law of God, and all good men.

In this Case of ours we apprehend our selves Arbitrarily (contrary to Law) imposed upon by a sort of rash inconsiderate men, who have run themselves upon a work more proper for a Parliament then a Parish, and if they had a Reward accordingly, they would receive but their desert, and

it being to do a work illegal and

¶ For the Truth of this we may appeal to the Consciences of many of the Inhabitants of ~~Middleton~~ Parish, whether they & their Neighbours were not more sober, temperate, grave and wise, and guilty of less sin and Transgression against God and man twenty or thirty years ago; then at this time; if so, then wherein are people profited by the studied Sermons of Harelings?

so ¶ needless and unprofitable to our selves and Neighbours, we were willing to stop their Ecclesiastical Proceedings; otherwise we should have been passive, and silently suffered the weight of the laden Hands of an holy Church, whose Mercies are very Cruelties; witness the Popish Inquisitions, and cruel Torture & Burnings of conscientious men, and the Protestants Goals, Whips, Stocks, Cutting off Ears and Stigmatising, and Hanging al, as in New England, upon the account of Church Religion and Morality; all which we resist against, as directly

contrary to, and inconsistent with the Pure Christian Religion and Church of Christ, as is signified in Sort in what follows; but is according to the Whore, or false Church, whose Weapons are carnal, and not spiritual, who is and hath been so, the Apostacy very basic in Christendom in spoiling peoples Souls, imprisoning, and corrupting their Bodies, and

some-

(31)
sometimes killing them also, and making her self
drunk with the blood of the Saints and Martyrs of Je-
sus.

Now, it's so far from the Nature and Life of the true
Church to inflict Corporal Punishments for Spiritual Offen-
ces, or to hurt any man's Liberty, Person and Estate in this
World, about the things of the world to come, as Faith,
Conscience and Manner of Worship, that it is both unna-
tural and unreasonable; for if People do err in their minds,
and understand things relating to their future Estate amiss,
and are of an unsound Judgement in the things of God, and
in matters relating to his Kingdom, &c. Spiritual-weapon-
ed Men, and not Goalers and Executioners of corporal
Punishments, are to deal with such People, and inform and
restore them with the Spirit of Love and Meekness, if they
can, according to the Example and Doctrine of Christ Jesus
his Apostles and primitive Christians, who never used
outward Force and Violence, or corporal Punishments
to compel People to be of their Religion; Christianity
came not this way into the world, neither is it, or ever was
it upheld or propagated by such means; it's a Gospel of Life
and Salvation, and brings Peace on Earth, and Good Will
to Men; and the true Ministers of it being endued with
Power from on High, in the universal Love of God persua-
ded men to be reconciled to him, by turning them from the
Darkness within to the Light and Grace of God within
from the Power of Satan within, by which their minds
were captivated, to the Spirit and Power of God within,
that they might receive Remission of their Sins, and
Inheritance among them that are sanctified.

And if people would not receive them into their
Houses, or build them some Houses to preach this Go-
spel

spel to them in, they were not to call for Fire from Heaven upon them, nor send their Bodies to Goal, or take away or spoil them of their Earthly Treasures, because they would not receive their heavenly Treasures, nor own and believe them to be Dispensers and ministers of it; let all that pretend themselves to be Christ's Ministers compare themselves herewith.

And let this be considered by every true English man, That if the rash, inconsiderate, unlawful Proceeds of a few of our Neighbours becomes presidential, and escapes Correction, which is so direct against the fundamental Law of our Country, others may take Boldness to rate and raise Eighteen Thousand Pound as well as Eighteen Hundred Pound upon the like Pretence.

But we attribute this Favour and Connivance to the powerful Influence of the Ecclesiastical Authority, whose Inclination and nature is to creep over the Heads of Law and Gospel too, and to sit as a Queen over mens Persons, Liberties, Lives and Estates; so that if people please not the Church (or that Set or Sort of men, that in a Nation or Country calls themselves so, and hath the Power in their hand, then all that's contrary is liable to Ruin by the Power and Influence of holy Church, (falsely so called) being indeed no other then the great whore, which John saw sit upon the waters, and ride upon the Scarlet-coloured Beast.

For it hath been the work of the false Church for many ages and generations past, and is her endeavour at this day, to get upon the backs of Lords, Dukes, Kings and Emperors, and other great men of the Earth, and to lead them which way she pleaseth; and she arrayeth her self in such beautiful Apparel, and giveth her self such glorious Titles, and holds forth such a glorious Cup, that through

the *Mystery of Iniquity*, that works in her, they are so far deceived and intoxicated, that they think and are persuaded, she is the Church and Spouse of Christ; and so many mighty men and Monarchs of the Earth, in this part of the world called Christendom especially, are obedient to her, and as tractable under her, as a Beast is under its Rider, and ready to do any Drudgery for her.

And this is observable, That if any of these become sensible of the weight of their Burden, and so see what a *Mystery of Iniquity* they have upon their Backs, and begin to be weary and unwilling to carry it any longer, then such a one, let him be Lord, Duke, King or Emperor, if her severe Censures, Curbs and Threats, will not serve to bring him again into Obedience to holy Church, she will get his Blood to drink, if she can, as might be instanced at large by many Examples.

It's said, That it is a *Maxime* in the Church of Rome, not to keep Faith with such she accounts Hereticks, longer then till she hath an Advantageous Opportunity to break it; and that she is very ready with her Dispensations to absolve Subjects from their Obedience to their Natural Prince and Governour, if they judge him an Enemy to holy Church: if th^e Reports and Saying be true, we declare it a Cursed Opinion, and Inconsistent with Humane Society and the Well-being of Mankind, and an evident Mark and Sign of the Whore, Beast and False Prophet, and not of the Church of Christ.

And if the Church of England and other Protestants be of the mind and Opinion of Doctor Parr, that when People differ in their Judgments and Understandings about spiritual Matters, and are tender and Conscientious, and cannot conform to their way of Worship, and have the Nick

Reproachful Name of a Quaker given them (as the Primitive Christians had that of a Nazarine) though they live never so Soberly, Righteously, Justly, Uprightly and Inoffensively among their Neighbours and all people, relating to the things of a Man, that notwithstanding this, SUCH ARE NO SUBJECTS OF THE KING, which in plain English implies thus much, that the King nor Law is not concerned to defend their Lives, Liberties nor Estates; but that, because they are out of the Pale of their Church, they ought to lie open to the Mouth of every Ravenous Beast and Devourer. So far as the Protestants are tainted with this Opinion, they are guided and governed by the same spirit of Darknes, Ignorance and Cruelty, and in the Ground is one with the other, and the same evil Effects and cruel Consequences attend it; for that People, Sect or Opinion that will take upon them to absolve Kings and Governours, and the Judges of the Law, from being concern'd in Duty to administer Justice and take a fatherly Care of Harmless Innocent People, that dwell within their Dominions, because they are not of the same mind about Religion, nor do not conform to their Church-Discipline, we say, it is the same spirit of Deceit and Delusion with that which pretends a Power to absolve Subjects from their Obedience to their Superiours, and is also inconsistent with Humane Society, Cruel, Unnatural, Bloody and Unreasonable: Let such as are concerned therein Repent thereof; for they have not the Spirit of Christ ruling in their Hearts, though they may have his Name in their Mouthes.

Here follows a Copy of a Letter sent to Dr. Parr, and the rest concerned, in which was enclosed a Copy of the Substance of what follows.

Doctor Parr,

THE Enclosed we send thee, before we communicate it further, that if thee, or any of the rest whom it doth concern, can except against or disprove anything thereof, as relating to matter of Fact, contained therein, you have your liberty or opportunity to signify the same; for when your forty dayes are expired, we expect the end of your work designed against us to be soon accomplished, that is, to have our Bodies in Goal, from our Wives, Children, Trades and Families, which is a work of Cruelty, and not of Christianity: and know this, the Cry of the Innocent will enter the Ears of the Lord against you, and if you shall be suffered to make our Wives Widdows, and our Children Fatherless, though we can forgive you, yet it is just with the Lord if he measure the same measure to you again; for the Blood of the Righteous will cry, as *Abel's* did, and Vengeance will pursue the Evil-doer, and you shall be justly charged as the Prophet *Micah* charged the professing *Jews*, *Mic. 3. 10.* *They build up Sion with Blood, and Jerusalem with Iniquity:* (read the whole Chapter, which indeed is applicable to *England*, as truly as ever it was to the Nation of the *Jews*) And let this be considered, that if you polute and stain your Church-building with the Blood of the Innocent, through Imprisonment in nasty Holes, and put them out of a Capacity to provide Bread for
C
their

their VVives and Children, this will so defile you and your Temple, that the Bishop of this Diocess, nor all the Bishops of *England* will not be able to remove and take it away by all the power of Consecration they have; and the stones in the VVall shall witness against you in the Day of Account.

Now, for the Causes mentioned in the first page, we do intend to make your VVork publick, that all may see what spirit rules in thine and your Hearts, notwithstanding your talk and profession of Christ and Christianity, and that you concerned may be convinced concerning the Evil of your proceeds against us (seeing it is matter of Conscience unto us) and Repent thereof, and decline the prosecuting that which the spirit of Enmity and Violence (and not the spirit of Christ) would lead you to; so would you bring forth Fruits more becoming the *Christian Religion*, which is the Desire of your *Friends* and *Neighbours*, whose daily endeavour and practice is, to shun the way of the wicked, and to avoid the Path of evil men, and to live in that *Love* which teacheth to desire the good of all, and the fall and hurt of none; and herein our sleep is sweet, and our rest is pleasant, even as we hate the *bread of wickedness* and the *wine of violence*; and this is the Path of the Just, which is as a shining Light, shining more and more unto the perfect day; but the way of the wicked is Darkness, they know not at what they stumble.

And Dr. *Parr*, know this, If thou madest choice of those words in the 4th chapter of the *Proverbs*, vers. 14, 15, 16: for thy Text the Day thy *Excommunication* was read against us (as is at least supposed) as if they did concern us, or were applicable upon us, thou art
greatly

greatly mistaken ; for we have not only talked of and professed the Light, Law, Grace and Spirit of Truth, but received the same, learn't of & walked in the same, and are guided thereby out of the Path and Way of the Wicked, and out of the spirit of envy, evil-wil, mischief and violence against any man's Person, Life, Liberty or Estate ; it would be well for you if thee, nor none of thy Flock, were found in those steps : not farther to enlarge, only remember and consider this one saying written in the 5th of the Proverbs, *The Wayes of a Man are before the Eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his Goings* ; if this Scripture, with that which saith, *Men shall give an Account of their Deeds done in the Body, whether Good or Evil*, were truly weighed and believed by all that read them, it would put a stop to the Worker of Iniquity, and quench the Spirit of Violence and Cruelty, Prejudice and Evil, and Meekness, Love and Righteousness would grow and encrease amongst our Neighbours and Country-men, and Peace, Quietness and good Neighbourhood would abound, which is indeed the Desire of our Hearts, and our daily Practice to promote, according to our state and capacity, and can in Truth subscribe our selves, *Lovers of our Neighbours, and Haters of no man.*

Signed on the behalf of the rest of our Friends by us,

John Ottery,

John Torleton,

Griffith Jones,

John Potter.

A
BRIEF NARRATIVE

Of the Proceedings of

Doctor Parr, &c.

VVE the said people being presented and cited to the Bishop's Court, made our Appearance, and according to the Priviledge and Right of every English man demanded a Copy of the Lybel formed against us, which was granted, and finding their proceeds were contrary to the known Law, and that the design of the Bishop's Court was forth-with to curse or excommunicate us out of their Church, and to cast our Bodies into Jayle, did account it our Duty both as Men and Christians, to endeavour to prevent the same, and accordingly made motion by Council at the King's Bench Bar for a prohibition, which was not there positively denyed, but deferred; and we were adviled by one of the Judges, To apply our selves further to the Bishop's Court, presuming

|| This commonly pro-
veth according to the En-
glish Proverb, *Out of the*
Frying-Pan into the Fire.
they would do as Right, as the Case did
require; if not, then to || appeal to the
Archies or Delegate. So upon this
his Presumption, that the Bishop's
Court would do us Right (or be-
cause he was willing to please the Priests) refused to grant a Prohibition.

Then being left to the Mercy of the Bishop's Court, we again received Citations to appear, and did appear accordingly divers times; but finding our lawful Exceptions against the Lybel, and all

all we could offer and plead, though never so just and according to their own Law, slighted and over-ruled, and ourselves pronounced excommunicate by a Person who declared himself *Ignorant in the Matter* (but willing to fulfil the Design of the Court) for they refused to receive our Answers under our Hands and Seal by proxy rendered, which according to Law and the Rules of their own Court they ought to have received; but perceiving they had to do with a People that made Conscience of keeping that eminent Precept and Command of Christ [SWEAR NOT AT ALL] and seeing their other *gins* and *traps* were too weak to hold them, and to stop their Passage towards Relief at Common Law, seemed resolved to make this occasion of *refusing to Swear* the Colour and Ground to pronounce us *excommunicate* for *contempt to their Court*, though we had shewed Diligence to appear time after time, according to their *citations* and *arbitrary summons* in their own name and authority, and had answered them in all their Proceedings, so far as lawfully they might, both as Men and Christians: And the *dishonour* and *contempt* of their Court is on their own parts, occasioned and contracted by their own evil doing, in trampling upon the Law and the Legal Right of others, yea, and the Rules and Presidents of their own Court (though called *spiritual*) when they stand in the way of their own Interest and Design, as in this particular Case is proved true by Experience.

So contrary to the Doctrine of Christ (whose Ministers and Servants they pretend to be) they would compel people to *swear*, and so break his Command; and if they refuse, call it *contempt to their Court*, pronounce them *excommunicate*, and get their Bodies into *Goal*, separate *Husband* and *Wife*, *Father* and *Children*, *Master* and *Servants*, put all Relations out of a Capacity to serve one another according to the Law of Nature and Grace, and all about a Matter of Conscience, this is neither like Christ nor Christianity, but unnatural and inhumane: And you have not shewed forth the Qualifications of *spiritual Men* or *good Christians*, but do clearly demonstrate your selves to be selfish, carnal, unjust and unreasonable, and great Strangers to that Royall Law of Christ Jesus, *As you would have others do to you, so do you unto them*; such Doings will never convince any that you

are indeed what you have a Name to be, but rather confirm them in their present Perfwasions: And if you by your Threats, Cruelty and In iustice fright any of Tenders of Conscience, and bring them through fear of suffering into an outward conformity to your Church and Worship, know this, you make them two-fold more the Children of Hell then before: Outward force, violence and compulsion may make hypocrites, but no true Christians; it may change the manners, but not the mind, &c.

It might be well if you spiritual men, so called, would seriously consider, whether your Self-interest [and not the Love and Care of Souls] be not the ground of your Church and Court Proceedings, seeing Money will satisfy for all sins and transgressions against you and your Church, as in your Mother Church of Rome? Whereas indeed all the bodily Exercise, together with all the Gold and Silver in the World, is not able nor fitt to expiate or satisfy for one sin committed against God, Christ and the true Church; neither did the true Church in any Age since Christianity was in the World, ever absolve or acquit sins and transgression against her for Money: It is time to consider your way, and amend, and cease to exercise deceit and violence over the People for Jewish ends; and if you have no better Way, Means and Arguments to inform, persuade and convince people, that you are of the True Church, because you have Power and Compulsive Laws on your side, and can destroy their Liberty, Estate and Lives through streight Imprisonment in nasty Goals (it is being the Way and Means of the False Church, whose Weapons are and were alwayes Carnal) there are a People whom God hath raised up in this Age, and instructed in the pure Christian Religion, whose goods you may spoil, whose bodies you may torture and imprison, and whose blood you may drink also, sooner then force and compel them by your unchristian means to become conformable Members to your Church.

Now we seeing our selves thus abused, and that they over-run the Rules of their own Court, to hasten us into Goal, we again moved for a Prohibition at the Exchequer-Bar, and the chief Baron shewed himself just and moderate, and was ready to grant the same, their Council refusing to plead further in their behalf, their own

own delay, that the greater part or some part of the Parish made the Rate; dissatisfied their Council, and would then plead no further, only prayed time till the first day of the next Term, which was, the second instant, betwixt which time, as the sequel plainly proves, Doctor Parr with others had made way so far in the matter, by devised untrue Allegations and other ways, that our Request of a Prohibition might not be answered; for when our Council pleaded, they were very much discountenanced by some of the Judges with Words, Nods and Frowns; and though they pleaded Law in the case, it was not regarded; only the chief Baron shewed himself very just and impartial, and declared his Opinion, That a Prohibition did properly lie in the case; but seeing his Brethren were of another Opinion, he should leave it.

Now, it is to be observed, that the Court could not without manifest partiality deny a Prohibition, until false Allegations were devised; and pleaded in open Court to overturn our Suggestions; therefore Doctor Parr, with the rest, had by Unt. up Information and Large Fees (or to use some of their own words, Large Greasing) fitted and prepared their Council to plead very grand Lyes or Untruths, and produced an Oath in Court, together with the Witness and Testimony of Doctor Parr to affirm to the same.

The particular Lyes were as followeth; First, That there was a Necessity to pull down the said Church, the Pillars being Wood, bowed and rotten, the Roof and South Wall ready to fall, many being hurt and wounded with the falling part of the same.

Secondly, That, Dr. Parr and some others did contract with the Workmen for 120 to build the Chancel, South-Porch & new Enlargements; and he and others paid distinctly for the same parts, and that it was not included in the Parish-Rate; himself giving Fifty pound part of the Hundred and Twenty pound agreed for the Building the same.

Thirdly, That all the Parishioners, &c. every man, were satisfied, and had all paid their Money, only Twenty Four Quakers; and that the whole Assessment upon them was not above Forty pound, the greatest amongst them being not above Fifty shillings.

These, with other things to the same effect, being affirmed as with a Face of Brass in open Court, though great Untruths, yet

great

great Credit we Judge, by reason of the Presence and Testimony of
 Doctor Parr) was by three of the four Judges given to them, and
 all that could be urged to the contrary rejected and slighted; and
 though by our Council we much pressed to go to Tryal, & if we did
 not prove our Suggestion, we would give them Cost; yet nothing
 that could be said on our parts would prevail, the burthen of the
 Plea against us being, **NONE BUT QUAKERS, MY**
LORD; NONE BUT TWENTY FOUR QUAKERS,
MY LORD: As if, when people have the Nick-Name of a
 Quaker put upon them, they then lose all their Right, and forfeit
 all their Priviledges as Men, and the Benefit of the Law of their
 Native Country; as if, to have the Frowns of the Church, were
 sufficient to turn them out of the Protection of the King, Law
 and Government, and to have their Liberties, Estates and Lives
 exposed to Ruin; and that Dr. Parr is of this Opinion, appears
 by his own words speaking that day, being the second of the third
 Moneth called May, to one in this manner and words, **THAT**
THE QUAKERS WERE NONE OF THE KING'S
SUBJECTS.

This Saying doth not become a man of his Profession; it shews
 plainly what spirit rules in his Heart under this Talk of Religion
 and Christianity, he is a great way off the Mind and Spirit of Christ
 Jesus, whose Minister or Servant he pretends to be. It may tru-
 ly be said of him as Christ said to his Disciples, who
 Luke 9. 54. desired to have Liberty to command Fire to come
 down from Heaven to destroy those that would not receive him,
 it's said, *He turned, and rebuked them, and said, they knew not what*
spirit they were of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy men's
Lives, but to save them; and his Disciples and Ministers indeed
 are of the same Mind and Spirit now. But what would this Spi-
 rit and Opinion do with the Quakers, and such as do not comply
 with his Mind and Understanding in and about Matters of Church
 and Worship? Let him seriously consider the extent thereof,
 this unnatural bloody Conceit of his, (viz.) *That if people please*
not the Priests, or transgress against their Church, then they cease
to be the King's Subjects, and lose their Birth-right down, and the
Benefit of the Law of their Native Country. Would not this
 Notion

Notion & Judgment of his lead him into that Ravenous Appetite which some Priests had in the Prophets dayes, which he compared to Dogs, yea, greedy dumb Dogs, that could never have enough, (bear the Roughness of the Speech being they are the Prophet's words) read vers. 10 and 11. of the 56th chapter of *Isaiah*, and see if *England* doth not abound with such blind, ignorant, ravenous Watchmen there spoken against, who, when people put not into their Mouthes, they prepare War against them; such there were in the Prophet *Micah's* time, and such there are now in *England*, that preach for Hire, and divine for Money, &c. read the third chapter of *Micah's* Prophecy against the Cruelty of Princes, and the Falshood of Prophets and Priests, that cause people to err, and that bite with their Teeth, and cry *peace* so long as people feed them.

Indeed Dr. *Parr's* Moderation and peaceable Behaviour hath hitherto been noted and commended, in that he hath not thrown so many into Goal for *Tythes* as he might, nor persecuted Dissenters that dwell within his Parishes for *not Worshipping in the same Manner, Form and Way as he doth*: But now one of his Parishes has more in it presented for not coming to Church (and as is said, to be proceeded against by the Statute of 20 l. a Moneth) and Excommunicated for not Repairing their Church, then all the Parishes in and about *London*: so that if he gives farther place to this unnatural Opinion of his (*That people cease to be Subjects to the King when they are called Quakers*) it will quickly lead him out of all his Moderation and seeming Tenderness, and his Mouth will open wide enough to swallow down their Bodies, Liberties, Lives and Estates; and if his Church's Curse was powerful enough, would send their Souls to Hell also. This would be the Work of a sad Pastour; who is found in it, cannot be a Watcher for the good of Souls, nor a good Shepherd, that careth naturally for the Sheep, but are found Watchers for Gain from their Quarter, and for the Fleece: And it is an infallible Mark, Sign and Demonstration of a Minister of Antichrist, False Prophet and Deceiver, to declare, *That people ought not to live in peace, and enjoy their Liberty and property, and benefit of the Law of their native Country, as Subjects of the King, except they will be his Disciples, or members of his Church,*

repair the same, and put into his mouth also; these are such as serve their own Bellies, and not the Lord Jesus Christ, but are a Scandal and Reproach to the Christian-Religion while they profess themselves Ministers of it. But the nakedness, greediness, covetousness, enviousness, deceitfulness and cruelty of the priesthood appears more and more daily, and is obvious to Thousands and Ten Thousands of people in this our native Country of England, who make a trade of Religion, and learn to be Preachers of the Gospel (as they say) as a Man learns to make Shoes; they learn and buy their Skill of Preaching of Man; and they not only sell it again to their free Customers, that willingly buy, but they impose the sale and exact the price of others that dwell within their Quarter, though they like them not, nor will have none of their Ware; this is a sore Evil in the Priesthood, and a great Burden upon the people. So much by the way.

But to proceed to shew the truth of our Plea, and the grossness of our Adversaries lyes. First, there was not a necessity to pull down so much as was pulled down; neither was a danger of its sudden fall, as was pretended, the wooden Pillars were mostly Sound; and the Roof and Walls might have been Repaired and Amended according to our suggestion, for Three or Four Hundred Pound: Only you would have it Fine, and Beautiful and honourable Vaults; for when some urged to have it Repaired, and not pulled down (it is said) D. P. answered, *What did they think he would Preach in a patched Church, or have a place propt up with Prongs and Forks?* So that if we could have had Liberty, we could have answered the chief Baron's Question very fully; which Question was, *Whether there were any thing done more out of Curiosity, than of Necessity?* Secondly, there was no Contract made, nor so much as propounded to be made with the Master Work-man for the new Foundation work, South North Chancel nor Vaults, distinct and separate from the rest of the Work, before the rate was made, and your Lybel formed against us; but all was Included together in one Bargain. And the Rate mentioned in your Lybel is sufficient to pay for all, if Collected. And that this your Plea and invented Lye, took

beginning since you saw that you had out-gone the Bishop's order, any President or Law either: And that, what hath been done through Curiosity, hath occasioned great part of the Charge. And your pleading an agreement with the Work-man for One Hundred and Twenty Pound for the said work, was a late forged device to baffle and prevent the Course of Justice. Thirdly, every Man in the Parish were not satisfied nor Consenting to what was done: Neither had every one paid their Money, but Twenty Four *Quakers*: Neither is Fifty Shillings the greatest Sum Rated upon any *Quaker*, nor Forty Pound the whole Sum laid upon them, some being above Six Pound, and the Sum rated upon them about One Hundred Pound: And more then a Hundred that pay to the Poor besides *Quakers*, did not consent to the same: So this is a four-fold Lye. And seeing you have by corrupt Interest and Lyes, stopped the Currant of Justice, you have no cause to rejoyce, nor ring Bells for Joy, the consideration how you have come by, and accomplished your designs, truly weighed in a serious Spirit, and Measured by the rule of *Christianity*, of which you have a Profession, is really a great cause of Sorrow: and when you come to give an Account of your Deeds done in the Body, you shall be sensible thereof.

The *Primitive Christians* practice was, to rejoyce in the Truth and not in Iniquity, and to speak the Truth, every man to his Neighbour, and to bear false witness against none, and despise dishonest Gain, or the gain of Oppression, and to do as they would be done by: Never so much as attempting to Compel such as did not believe nor receive their Doctrine, nor own them as true Ministers, or a true Church to Contribute to their Maintenance, or to Build or Repair their Meeting-places: Neither Law nor Gospel doth afford you any President or Example for such a practice; you are faine to make use of such Laws and Canons as were made in the dark Night of Popery, to Authorize you in such kind of work. You deny the *Pope* and *Papists* in Words, but imitate them in Practice, and make use of all their Laws and Customs in being (as you have occasion) to serve your Interest, and defend you in your Trade of *preaching* for Money, *praying* and *Singing* for Money, *Christening*, *Churching* and *Burying*.

ing for Money, Selling Absolutions and Licences for Money, and for Money a Man may get into your Church again, after he is Cursed out, or Excommunicate; and for Money a Man may purchase any part of your Religion; yea, for Money a Man may have Prayers and Sermon made for him after he is Dead; but without Money it's hard to get any thing of the Priesthood; not a Child Christened, nor a Corps buried without Money by many Priests, though the perion concerned, have scarce enough to buy them Bread; these and such like covetous Practices of the Priesthood, together with the Unchristian-like Conversation of their people makes the Christian Religion stink among Jews, Turks, and Infidels.

Now that Religion and Religious practices that is or can be bought or sold for Money, is an Abomination in the sight of the Lord, and Rejected by all tender-hearted Conscientious People. And it is a grief to many, to observe and behold how those called protestants do follow the Example, and Imitate that dark Superstitious Sect of the papists; who sell their Masses, Pardons, Absolutions and Dispensations, &c. for Money; so the protestants Pray, Sing, Preach, Absolve, and sell Licences for Money; who are only changed in Name, Manner, Form, and Ceremony, and some outside Practices, but not in Nature and Life; the same Spirit of Cain, Core, False Prophet, Idol Shepherd, Hireling, Money Diviner, Pilate, chief Priest, Judas; and the rest of that Generation, mentioned and testified against in the holy Scriptures, Rules and Reigns in the Hearts of the formal protestants as in the papists; and it is to the Heart, the inside that God looks: And all true Reformation begins within, in the Heart, if that be, and continue Corrupted, Deceitful and Desperately wicked; Unpurged, Uncleaned, and Unsanctified by the precious Blood and Life of Jesus, all Names, and outside Reformations, Worships, and Sacrifices, &c. are of no worth, nor acceptable in the sight of God, according to Christ's teaching in the Sixth Chapter of Luke, 43. 44. 45. verl. *A good Tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt Tree bring forth good fruit, every Tree is known by his fruit, for of Thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a Bramble-bush gather they Grapes; A good man out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth*

that which is good, an Evil man out of the Evil Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is Evil; for out of the abundance of the Heart, his mouth speaketh; the Tree must be good, the Heart purged, ere the fruit can be good or well-pleasing to God. So it is not a changing from one Opinion to another, or from the Form of the Romish Prelacy, to that of Episcopacy, or from that to Presbytery, or from any one Sect to another, is of any worth, or acceptable to God; 'tis the turning from Darkness to Light, from Sin to Righteousness, from the Power of Satan to the Power of God; it is the Creation of a clean Heart, and the renewing of a right Spirit, it is to know the inside cleansed, and then the outside will be clean also: These are the things that are of an absolute necessity, and of great Worth, and this to know and witness will stand People in stead in the Day of the Lord, when all Formallity and outside Worship among all the Sects in Christendom will vanish away like Smoak, this will stand and abide: And these are the true Worshippers of God, in the Spirit and in the Truth, who Experimentally know the Power, Vertue, and Operation of the Spirit of Truth in their own Hearts, Minds and Consciences, making them free from that which did defile, corrupt and darken them: These are *Christians* indeed, *Jews* inward indeed; all others are but *Christians* in Name, let their Profession and Form of Religion be what it will.

But to proceed, we being denyed a *prohibition* at the *Exchequer Court*, through corrupt Interest, and the false Allegations before mentioned, we moved by two Councils at the *Common-pleas Bar*, who pleaded and urged their own Law to shew that of Right, A *Prohibition* ought to be granted, like men of honesty; but the same untruth as was urged at the *Exchequer Court* being pleaded again, and that Sentence, NONE BUT *QUAKERS*, MY LORD, NONE BUT TWENTY FOUR *QUAKERS*, MY LORD; being often repeated, that Sentence seemed enough to turn all against us; so no *Prohibition* could be obtained, though offer was made to go to Tryal in few dayes; yea, the Council desired but two dayes to prove our suggestion or give them Cost, but all in vain, nothing could prevail, whether because we were *Quakers*, or because they were not will-

ling to offend the Ecclesiastical Authority, is not certain; in the Priests Hands they found us, and there they seemed resolved to leave us, till they had wrought their Wills upon us, and fitted us for a Jayle; and because they were greedy to effect the same, and not willing to loose any time, they proceeded the very next day to publish their Excommunication in their Meeting-place, commonly called a *Tabernacle*; (but by some of their own Church, a *Smock-House*, because Buils by a Collection among Women) in some time they found they had committed an Errour in their haste, in reading their *Excommunication* in this new Erection; and that it must be read in a place called a Church; and they having not any fit, and Consecrated in their own Parish, lest their Fathers work of Violence and Persecution should loose time they procured their Curse to be published in another old Mase-house hard by, standing in the same County. And now the next thing they wait for, is, the end of the mercy of the Statute Law which allows Forty Dayes at least, in favour of every Excommunicated person, ere the Priests can get a Writ to throw their Bodies into Jayle. It is much to be questioned, whether the Mercy of Ecclesiastical Courts would extend to forty hours; did not the Statute Law put a check upon them; yet these Courts are made up of the Principal Members of their Church, and called Spiritual Men, such as have entred into holy Orders; but what Spirit, Church and Order they are of, their Fruits sufficiently declare to all that are not wilfully blind. And all People may Pray, *From the Bishops Courts and unreasonable men, Good Lord deliver us.*

And now, let all concerned in the Parish of *Mary Magdalen's*, who have given out such unchristian Words, and cruel Threats against the *Quakers*; as that they would send them to the Devil; and that they should lie in Jayle and Rot; and that they would Ride many mile to see them Hanged; and that they should be prosecuted for Twenty pound a Month, for not coming to Church; and to Ruin their Estates and Trades, and not leave them a Bed to lie upon; and to prove them no Subjects to the King: Let such Evil-minded men know, that the God whom they fear and serve, is able to deliver out of their Hands; but if he will not, know this, they are not careful to answer

answer your Unrighteous Demands, nor bow to your corrupt Wills, nor Worship the Image you set up: And if the Lord should deliver them into your Hands, as he did *Job* into the hand of the Devil; they are assured of this, that he will furnish them with strength and patience, to undergo all you shall be suffered to do against them: And as they abide with the Lord, and live in his Fear, his refreshing Consolating presence will accompany them, and fill their Hearts with Joy, Peace, Content, and Satisfaction, though without the pale of your Church, though in a nasty Prison upon Straw, and out of the King's protection, and counted as the Off-scouring of all things, not fit to live in their native Country, as their Brethren the ancient Christians were in Ages and Generations past: I say, as they suffer for Righteousness sake in Conscience to God, & not as Evil-doers, they shall have the Answer of a good Conscience, and enjoy the Presence of the Lord, which is better then Life, and all those things you threaten to deprive them of; and they shall live the Life and dye the Death of the Righteous, and enter in and inherit the Crown of Life, when you that are of a bitter spirit, a persecuting envious spirit (against your Neighbours, who have done you no Wrong) and yet profess Christ and Christianity, shall see your selves shut out; and when trouble, anguish, sorrow, pain, perplexity of spirit and horror of conscience shall attend you in your Houses and upon your Beds: for the Hand of God will lie heavy upon the Evil-doer and Cruel Men; and *Vengeance is the Lord's*, and he will repay it, and to him they can commit their Cause, and appeal to for Justice, seeing their Importunity (though like the poor Widow's to the Unjust Judge) cannot prevail with men.

They are known (*viz.* the people called *Quakers*) to be a quiet, peaceable people among their Neighbours in all parishes, Towns, Cities and Countries where they dwell, throughout *England*; and great Observers and Honourers of the End of Magistracy and true Christian-Government, which is a praise to them that do well, and a terror to them that do evil; and are true Subjects to the King, and obedient to all the good and wholesome Laws of their native Country, which tend to preserve men's Liberties, Properties, Persons and Estates; not for fear of Punishment, but
for

for Conscience sake; and they are ready to obey every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, in all things relating to the Things of a Man, giving *Cæsar* his due, and readily paying all Rates and Taxes that tend to the Good, and Service, and Preservation of their Neighbours and Country-men, which is proper for any Christian men to do; but in things relating to God and his Worship, and Conscience, they cannot endure to be imposed upon, they rather chuse to obey God than Man in all such Matters, and rather chuse to suffer the spoiling of their Goods, imprisonment of their Bodies, and give up their Lives also, then submit to the Wills and Commands of men in Matters of Religion, Church and Worship contrary to their Consciences and the perswasions of the Spirit of God in their own Hearts, knowing it is a grievous thing to fall into the Hands of the living God, and to sin against Light and Knowledge for fear of suffering; therein they would not only be like the Common Sinners of the Times (but worse) who in their common Service daily confess, *They do that which they should not do, and leave undone that which they should do*, who confess they have no Health in them, but are full of putrified Sores from the crown of the Head to the sole of the Foot: I say, they would be worse then these (if worse can be) and would be Abomination in the sight of the Lord, and a Stink in his Nostrils, and his Righteous Soul would be vexed with them from day to day, and they would not enjoy the Light of his Countenance, which to them is better then the encrease of Corn, Wine and Oyl.

They can say, and that truly in the sight of God, *That they desire the good of all men, and have Love and Good-wil to all their Neighbours and country-men, and can truly pray for their enemies, though they use them despihtfully; and do desire, they may see the evil of their wayes and repent, that they may enjoy Blessings and Peace temporal and eternal.* And if any thing to the contrary, as Evil Thoughts, Evil Will, Prejudice or Enmity arise in them or among them against any, they judge it with the Light and Spirit of God, as an Evil inconsistent with their Profession of Christianity, and directly contrary to the Life and Nature thereof; for they have & do declare & own it their duty, to live & walk according to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and to know the same

same written in their Hearts; and this Law was the Guide of Man-kind before Sin entered the World; before outward Laws were written in Tables of Stone, or in a Book. And those that are led by this Law of the Spirit of Life, are the righteous Men and righteous Women; against whom there is no Law, being living Witnesses of its power and vertue, making them free from that, and giving them Victory and Dominion over that, because of which, the outward Law was added, viz. Sin: And these own all good Laws outwardly, and will not transgress against them. And the Law as saith Paul, *Is not made for the Righteous, but for the Wicked, or Lawless and Disobedient; for the Ungodly, and for Sinners; for Unholy and prophane; for murderers of Fathers, and murderers of Mothers; for man-slayers, for Whoremongers; for them that defile themselves with mankind; for men-stealers, for Lyars, for perjured Persons; and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound Doctrine, &c.* 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10.

And whoever talks and professes the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and lives under the power of Sin and Death, (or continues in evil-doing) they are no true Subjects to it; nor lovers of it, nor walkers in it; but a shame and a Scandal to the Christian Religion, and Strangers and Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and the Law of Sin and Death rules in their Minds and Members, and leads them Captive into Evil; and these are in great Bondage to the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life: And these are the Children of disobedience; in whose Hearts the Prince of the Air, the Prince of Darkness Rules, and leads them to Envy, Hate and Persecute their Neighbours about Religion; which was never the work of a true Christian: *For he that hateth his Brother, is a man-slayer, 1 John 3. 15. He that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? 1 John 4. 20.*

Be Serious, consider your Work and Condition; and see how you stand in the sight of God, and mind God's witness in your own Consciences, and hearken to the Voice thereof; and it will infallibly inform, and shew you whether the Spirit of Christ
G and

and Christianity, which is the Spirit of Meekness, Gentleness, Kindness, and Brotherly love, rules in your Hearts, or the contrary; and the Voice of this, whether it be with you or against you, is as a Thousand Witnesses, and all that sleight, and disregard its Voice, and stop their Ears at the Reproof thereof, while the day of their Visitation lasts, Time will come upon them, and the Night will overtake them; wherein they shall hear its Voice whether they will or no, and be judged according thereto: Conscience is compared to a Book; and the Deeds done in the Body are written therein. And the time will come upon them, when this Book shall be opened, and Men shall be judged according to what is written therein. And remember, the Testimony of a good Conscience both in the day of Health and Prosperity, and in the day of Sickness and Adversity, in Life and Death, is of more value than all the World: And in any of these States and Conditions, a guilty defiled Conscience, or a Conscience that through custom of doing Evil, becomes as Seared with a hot Iron; and a hard Heart, is a grievous Plague and sore Judgment from God, and an inevitable sign, and forerunner of Everlasting Vengeance; and is indeed, the Fruit and Effect of Evil, or of sleighting and despising the voice of God's Witness, and the striving of his Spirit in Peoples Hearts and Consciences: But the answer and Testimony of a good Conscience is of God; and is as a Well-spring of Life to those that have it; where Blessings and Peace are enjoyed in the inward Man, amidst of all Adversity, Exercises and Tryals that may attend, both the outward and the inward; and such can lie down in Peace, notwithstanding all the Spirit of Enmity and Cruelty can work against them; whether it arise from an ignorant blind Zeal about Religion, Church and Worship; (as very much doth in *Christendom*) not only against those called *Quakers*, but one Sect against another: Some of them being so full of Zeal, and so empty of Knowledge, that they think they do God Service, to accomplish the Ruin of such as are not of their Church, &c. Or whether it arise from corrupt Interest, Prejudice, and Evil will; the ground is one, though the end be various. The Lord give all People Wisdom, to see their way out of the same; that they may be not only *Christians* in Name and Profession, but in Life

Life and Nature: Then all Enmity, Cruelty and Violence would cease, and Love, and Brotherly-kindness would abound: And then People would lie down like Lambs together, in that holy Mountain, (or Mountain of Holiness) where no destroyer is, where no Violence, Cruelty, and Oppression is: And this is the hearty desire of every true Christian, for their Neighbours and all People, who never were, nor ever will be found seeking the hurt or ruin of any man, threatening nor envying any, because they conform not to the same sort of Religion and Ceremonies that they are of. Whoever are found in this Spirit of Envy and Evil against their Neighbours and Country-men, about matters of Faith, Sacrifice and Worship, are of the Generation of *Cain* the first Envyer and Murderer about Religion; and such are not Christians indeed; neither doth the Law of God, nor their Neighbours dwell in their Hearts, nor the Fruits of the Spirit appear and grow amongst them; which Fruits are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance; against whom there is no Law; for the whole Law and the Prophets is fulfilled in this: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart; and thy Neighbour as thyself*, read *Matth. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40.* and *Gal. 5. 14.* to the end of the Chapter; and the Lord prepare your Hearts to consider what you read, that you may not only profess the holy Scriptures, but love and obey them, and receive that grace of which they testify; which taught and enabled the *Primitive Christians*, to live the Life of Holiness they call for, and to avoid the contrary; that you may not alwayes be like *silly Women laden with Sin*, and led about with divers lusts, ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth, which makes free; but that you may know deliverance from the burthen of Sin, and bondage of Iniquity, and from the Lusts that lead aside, and come to be made wise unto Salvation, and to feel the love of God spring in your Hearts; and Blessings and Peace attend you in your comings in, goings out, lyings down, and risings up; even that Blessing and Peace, which the World cannot give nor take away.

And that you and all people may come to inherit, possess and enjoy inward Peace with the Lord, and heavenly Consolation in the

the Spirit, and Life everlasting, is the hearty Desire of your Friends and Neighbours, in Derision called *Quakers*, who are redeemed from the spirit of Envy, hatred and Evil-will, from the spirit of Cruelty, Violence and Revenge, into that Love which desires that Peace on Earth and Good-will to Men, may more and more encrease and abound; and so far as it is possible make it their daily Practice and Endeavour to live in Peace, and to follow Peace and Quietness with all men, according to the Doctrine of the Christian Religion, which whosoever obeys and walks according thereto, are preserved out of all Strife, Contention and Evil-Will, Prejudice, Enmity, Cruelty and Violence; and who ever are found bringing forth these Fruits, let their Talk and Pretence to Religion and Christianity be never so great, they are certainly corrupt Trees, and disobedient Children, in whose Hearts the Enemy of God and Man rules, and they have not the Love of God and their Neighbour abiding in them, nor the Answer of a good Conscience, neither are they Christians indeed, though they profess the Name, which will stand none in stead in the Day of Account.

Let all such, to whom this may come, remember they have been told so, and it is the Word of Truth to them, whether they will hear or forbear.

Now we, the *Quakers* (so called) do solemnly testify in the sight of God, Angels and Men, That we do not refuse to pay Tythes, to Repair old Mass-Houses (commonly and ignorantly called Churches) or to pay Priests and Clerks Wages, Easter-Reggennings, Midsummer-Dues, and such like, out of Wilfulness or Stubbornness, or out of any Enmity, Prejudice or Evil-will against any man's person whatsoever; but really and truly upon the Account of Conscience to God, knowing and believing that we should sin against God, and the Light of his Spirit in our Hearts, and wound our own Consciences in so doing. And we do upon the same account refuse to come to those old Mass-houses vulgarly called Churches, to hear a man of unclean lips and corrupt heart Say common Service to God, but Do none; read over common Prayer formally and customarily without the Spirit of Prayer; sing David's Psalms (turned in-
to

to Meeter by Queen *Elizabeth's* Fiddlers or Musicians) but not with the Spirit nor good Understanding; hear studied invented Sermons of an Hour long, composed in the Wisdom which this World teacheth, and so not profitable to Salvation, being only a profitable Livelihood to men of that Trade, who preach for Hire, and divine for Money, and seek for their Gain from their Quarter, and would exact and compel Money and Goods from such as like not their Merchandize, if they dwell within their Quarter or Parish: Those Prayers, Singers and Preachers for Money and Hire, are not like Christ's Ministers, who received and do receive freely, and did and do freely give; and they were and are Ministers of the manifold Grace of God. But these Hirelings, or Preacher for Money, have not received freely, neither from God nor Man; but have purchased their Ministry with Money, and are made by Men at Schools and Colledge; and are sent and ordained by Men, and not by the Lord, therefore they did not profit us when we were their Hearers and Disciples; neither do they profit the people at all, but rather cause them to err, as the False Prophets and Teachers did in the Prophet *Jeremiah's* time, recorded in the 23d chapter of his Prophecy, read from the 11th verse to the 32d verse, and what thou findest testified against the False Prophets in that day, is true against all that are found in the same spirit and practices at this day; the Priesthood of *England* now (as the Prophets then) speak a Vision of their own Heart, and not out of the Mouth of the Lord; they fill peoples Ears with a Noise of Words, and with fair Speeches or eloquent Discourses deceive the Hearts of the Simple, talking much of the Righteous Holy Men's Words, but not living their Life; speaking and smiting against Sin with that Weapon which can never destroy it in themselves nor others; their Preaching is like that of the Scribes and Pharisees, and not as one having Authority; they say, *Hear the Word of the Lord*, but speak their own words, conceivings and Inventions; they are of those that steal the Word from their Neighbour, and boast in other mens Lines, &c.

In *Christendom*, so called, what a great Trade do these Schoolmen, Rabbies, Doctors, Bishops and Hireling Priests make of the poor, honest, plain Tradesmen's Words, who were some

Plough-men, Herds-men, Shepherds and Fisher-men, om e of whom it's said *knew not a Letter*? And how is this part of the World (called *Europ*) filled with Books and Commentaries of *Papists, Prelates, Presbyters*, and other Sects, under Pretence of opening and giving the right Meaning of their Words, whereby indeed people are divided and confused, and various in their Understandings, and know not well what to do, nor whom to believe, nor which to follow; so instead of gathering people into Unity, they divide and scatter them, and lead them into Sects and Opinions; instead of Repairing the Breaches of the Walls of *Jerusalem*, they Build up the Tower of *Babylon*; instead of communicating to people the Key of Knowledge, they shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, and neither enter themselves, nor suffer those that would.

These things we have by sad and wasul Experience known, while we were seeking the Living among the Dead, and wandering from Mountain to Hill, from one Priest and Profession to another, changing, from one sort and fashion of Worship unto another, from one Sect and Opinion to another; but not from Sin to Righteousness, not from Evil to Good, nor from Death to Life; neither through them all did we witness a Translation from the kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of Christ, as the Primitive *Christians* did; but remained in Sin and Corruption, in Death and Darkness, talking of the Fame of Wisdom, and professing the holy Scriptures, the Words of holy, righteous, wise Men, the Words of sanctified, justified and redeemed Men; but not living the Life of *Righteousness, Wisdom, Sanctification, Justification and Redemption*; nay, we were so far from it, that we did not believe it was possible so to do while on this side the Grave; our Teachers caused us to err, teaching for Doctrine the Precepts of Men, and the Thoughts and Conceivings of their own corrupt Hearts, instead of the Word of the Lord; so we were as Blind led by the Blind, and walked in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death, and knew not whither we went; we stumbled, and knew not at what; and groped, like blind men, for the Wall; following the divers, uncertain, fallible Voices that are in the World, which say, *Lo, here is Christ*; *Lo, there is Christ*; others. *Behold*

hold he is in the secret Chamber; and we were going forth, and wandering after them, and wearying our selves for a very Vanity, spending our Money for that which was not Bread, and our Labour for that which did not satisfie. This was our state and condition in the day of our Ignorance, in the day of our Captivity and Bondage to the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life: But now we can say as the primitive Christians did, 1 Joh. 5. 19, 20. We know that the Son of God is come (not only that he Did come above Sixteen Hundred Years ago, but Is come) and hath given us a good Understanding, whereby we may know him that is true, and we are in him that's true, even in his Son Jesus Christ; this is the true God and eternal Life: And God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, whereby we can call God Father, and whereby we are led and guided out of all false wayes and false worships, out of the crooked wayes and by-pathes of our own finding out, into the one, true and living Way, and everlasting Worship, which is in the Spirit and in the Truth, which was before all the false Wayes and invented Worships upon the Face of the Earth, and will remain when they all vanish away.

So it is no new Sect or Opinion that we are now come unto, but the ancient Way, wherein the holy Fathers, Prophets, Apostles and all the Righteous walked in all Ages and Generations past, from Abel and Enoch unto this day, which is Christ, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sin; which is Christ, the true Light, that lighteth every man coming into the World; who is indeed the Way, the Truth and the Life, the Saviour of his People (not in their Sins, but) from their Sins: And the true Light now shines out of Darkness in thousands in this our Native Country, and makes manifest, reproveth and condemns every appearance of evil, and leads the Children of it out of the same; this is the Universal Way of God, wherein he is known, worshipped and served acceptably; this is his Son, in whom he is well pleased, and with all that are in him.

Therefore in this Light must all the Nations that are saved walk, and all that walk in it witness Safety from, and Power and Victory over the Evil One, and Blessings, Peace and Consolation abound in their inward man. But all that Reject and Despise, Sleight and

and Contemn the *Light and Grace of God teaching and shining within*, and the *leading, guiding and moving of the Spirit of God within*, they reject and despise the *Way and Means of Salvation*, and have no Strength against Sin, nor Victory over their Enemy the Prince of Darkness, which rules within in their Hearts; but remain Slaves and Captives to him, under the *Chains of darkness*, let their Talk and Profession of Christ and Christianity be what it will, this is the Word of Truth to all our Neighbours and Countrymen, whether they will hear or forbear, they shall find it True in the Day of Account.

The 17th of the 3d
Month, 1777.

Something

Something after.

V Hereas the Cry against the Quakers is; That they are Disobedient to the Law, Enemies to Magistrates, Haters of the Ministry of the Gospel, and no Friends to the Lawyers; and that they would overthrow good Government, pull down Churches, but build and repair none, &c.

In Answer to which we in short say thus much, That this Charge is utterly without just Cause, and directly false: For First, We are obedient to the whole Law, either actively or passively; and our Principle and Profession leadeth us to obey every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, not for fear of Punishment, but for Conscience sake; and herein stood the Christian Obedience in the primitive times, to every Law and Ordinance of Man that tended to the Encouragement and Praise of them that did well, and to the Terror of those that did Evil; to other Laws, Ordinances and Commands of Men, which did not carry this along with them, they were never actively obedient, but Witnesses against them, and Sufferers by them, as might be evidenced at large by a multitude of Examples throughout the whole Scriptures, and every Conscientious Christian Man must needs acknowledge, that God is to be obeyed rather than Men, when they command things repugnant to his Law, and impose upon the Mind, Heart, Conscience and Understanding, contrary to the Light and Law of God therein; this is to usurp the Throne of God, and to give Laws in his Kingdom, which is spiritual, and not of this World; and where God rules & governs in the hearts of men, which is and ought to be his Throne; and they know his Law (a) *(a) This is the New Covenant that God promised, and every Christian is to witness the law of God writ in his Heart, and his Fear in his inward Parts; and none can be a Christian without it.* (from whence Christian without it

all just, reasonable, good Laws outwardly did proceed) such cannot transgress against them, nor disobey them: So it is a manifest spirit of Envy that saith, *We are disobedient to Law*, seeing our Conversation among our Neighbours throughout this Nation witnesseth the contrary, and they find no just Cause or Occasion against us, but in things appertaining to Worship, Church, Religion and Conscience, which indeed are of a spiritual Concern, and not belonging to Men of corrupt Minds (though they give themselves the Name of *spiritual men*) to make and impose Laws about.

And as concerning *Magistracy* and *Magistrates*, whose Work is to judge between Man and Man, when they trespass one against another, according to Equity and Righteousness, without Respect to Persons, or any sinister Interest; these we truly Love and Honour, who bear not the Sword in vain, but relieve the Oppressed, and judge the Cause of the Innocent, and help the Poor a-

gainst the Mighty, and are a Terror to the Evil-doers; these judge for God, and not for Men; and the Lord is with them in Judgment, and the Blessings and Presence of the Lord will be upon them.

Now, it is the Evil-doers that are Enemies to Magistracy, and that make and create Trouble to good Magistrates, such as break and violate the Law of God and Man, and kill and steal, and commit Adultery, and bear false witness against them, and cover their Neighbours Wife, Ox, Ass, nor any thing that is his, &c. these are they that are Haters of Law and Magistrates, and disobedient to Authority.

Now we are kept by the Grace of God out of these things, and do by vertue of the Nature and Power thereof the things contained in the Law, which shews the Effect of the Law written in our Hearts; and so because we love and obey the Law and Magistrates, we fulfil the End of them both: But they that say, They love and honour the Law and Magistracy, and yet are found in the Evil-doing, they lye, and do not the Truth, and would subvert the Law, and overthrow Magistracy, and all Good Government among men, and are direct Enemies to Magistrates.

Now, to those that say, we Hate those that are Ministers of the Gospel; we say, and that truly, that it is a False Accusation; for

for we love no men more: they are indeed Embassadors of Peace and Reconciliation of Mankind to God; and they have the Power of Perswasion, and in the Spirit of Love and Meekness do prevail, and turn many from the Evil of their Wayes, and direct them into the Good Old Way and Ancient Path of Peace, which the Righteous in all Ages walked in, from *Enoch* unto this day; in which Way the Wayfaring man; though a Fool, cannot err [mark that] and seek and enquire for this Way.

Now, all such as pretend to be Ministers of the Gospel, and do not do and Effect this Work in and among people, it's an evident sign the Lord never sent them, and that they are not in Deed what they profess in Words; yet let all know, that we hate no men's Persons, though we bear witness against Deceit and Hypocritical Pretences amongst men of all Degrees and Professions, and would have men to be and to be known to be as they are in the sight of God, where all Coverings avail not.

And to such as say, we are no Friends to the Lawyers; and that, we would overthrow good Government, &c. We say, we are Friends to all men; and should rejoyce to see good Government set up among them; and especially amongst the Lawyers, that, that common Honesty and Right might be fulfilled among them, as is among other Trades-men, who sell a Penny-worth for a Penny: And we desire the Law might be declared in such plain terms, that the Lawyer Knowledge and Counsel might be certain; that he might undertake to do Peoples work and business to their Content, if he expect to receive their Money; as other Trades-men must: And that they would be so honest, that when People come to them with a bad Cause (which the Law is against) that they would instruct and Advise them better, and refuse to appear in it for love of Money: Then would Equity enter, and Justice run down as a mighty Stream. But when Lawyers undertake bad Causes, for bad People, for love of Money; Equity is obstructed, and the current of Justice stopped, delayed, deferred, if not perverted, and turned backward; and by this means, honest men are unjustly vexed, troubled and abused, through the Promiscuousness of the Law, and the crafty skill, Rhetorick and Interest of a bad Lawyer, and by these a poor man's Cause, though never so good,

is overthrown; all these things we would have amended; and have every man honest in his Employment, and do as he would be done by; and this only being observed, will bring People to be good friends, and love one another, and live together in Peace, as becometh Christians: And then we believe the Lawyers would not have so great a trade and Employment. But if we are accounted no friends to the Lawyers, because we desire them to be honest; if that be a fault, we must and shall be found guilty; however we are ready to judge and conclude, that the Deceit, Corruption, self-Interest, and love of Money among the Lawyers and those divers Officers exercised about the Law, is a sore Evil, and a great burthen to this Nation: *And that when Judges are restored as at first, and Councillors as at the beginning, such Corruption will be swept away, and such abuses will be reformed, and good Government will be established; first within in the Minds and Hearts of men, and then without, which is our hearty desire to see effected in this our Native Country.*

And as for the cry against us, that we would pull down Churches, &c. We are so far from it, that we wish, where there is one Church of Christ in a Nation, that there were an hundred: But as for old Mass-houses and such like, which are now used as Shops for those that make a trade of Preaching, to sell their Common-Prayer and Studied Sermons in, which ignorant People call Churches, those that believe them to be so, and love and delight in them, and those that drive a profitable Trade therein, &c. It is most right and proper for such to repair and build them; and such have a Propriety therein. So not lawful nor right, that we or any should pull down, impair or demolish any man's propriety; being also directly contrary to the Fundamental Law of this the Land of our Nativity, which all ought to observe and obey.

Now a Church of Christ, according to the Testimony of the holy Scriptures, is a Company of Believers in Christ, who are led and guided by his Spirit, learn of him, keep his Sayings, observe his Doctrine, and walk according to his Precepts and Commandments; and this Church may meet together in a House, as they did in the primitive Times; but a House cannot be a Church: and though the Church
of

of Christ be one, yet there may be many of these Churches in divers Places, Nations and Countries, as there was in the primitive Times divers Churches in *Asia, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus and Rome*; and *Paul* writes a Salutation to *Priscilla and Aquilla*, and the Church in their House; but never called a House a Church.

1 Cor. last Chap.

And the Church of Christ needs no man to build or repair it, being all living Stones, fitly joyned together by him, who is the Master-builder, Foundation and chief Corner-stone also; and this Church edifies it self in Love, and grows up an holy Habitation for God in the Spirit; and this is the Substance and Anti-type of that Tabernacle and outward Temple which God once commanded to be built, and was the Glory of *Israel* in its time, and the only Place wherein God appeared and was worshipped; but now he dwells not in Temples made with Hands, neither is worshipped with men's Hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all Life and Breath, and all things, &c. *Acts 17. 23.*

Note that the Word Church throughout the New Testament ought to be rendred Congregation, as in ancient Translations and primitive Times, and hath no relation to a House, as people falsely imagine and esteem.

Now, it is a very foolish, ridiculous and wicked thing for those called Christians to take their Neighbours and Country-men by the Throat, and say to them, *Give us Money to build and repair our Church, or we will Excommunicate you, and throw your Bodies into Gaol, where they shall rot, and spoil and ruin your Trades and Families, &c.*

If you have any Precept, President or Example for such kind of work in the holy Scriptures (which you pretend to be your Rule for Faith and Practice) let's know the Chapter and Verse where it is written, or else be ashamed and Repent of your Work, and make not Christianity (by your Wicked Practices) a Stink in the Nostrils of Atheists and Unbelievers.

So, whoever thou art that readst these things, thou mayst in short understand, that we are cryed out against in this Age, and reported and presented to be such like Monsters as *Paul* (that harmless man)

was said to be, when he was called a *Pestilent Fellow*, a *Ring-Leader of Sects*, a *Turner of the World up-side down*, *not fit to live upon the Earth*, &c. and this cry arose chiefly from the Priests, Rabbies, Doctors, and great Professors of those times, which soon influenced the common People, and it ariseth from the same spirit and like persons now against us, and for no other Cause then bearing witness to the Truth. Therefore we would have all people take heed how they hear and receive Reports, lest they judge and condemn the *Innocent without fair Tryal*, and hedge up their own way, and abide in the midst of Darkness; but be ready to obey that good Advice and Exhortation, *Try all things, and hold fast that which is good*: And as they come to find and hold fast that which is good, it will quickly furnish them with Strength against that which is Evil, and make them free from it also, and deliver them from those Chains and Fetters of carnal private Opinions traditionally and superstitiously introduced into their Minds and Understandings, through the Wiles of the Enemy, Decent and crafty Devices of Men of corrupt Minds, who make a Trade of Religion and the Scriptures, and serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Bellies; who though they may have a Zeal for their Opinions, it's not according to Knowledge, as is demonstrated by their Fruits, who like *Paul*, when he was a Pharisee, in his Blind Zeal thought he did well in Persecuting the Church of Christ, and in haling the Saints to Prison by Vertue of his Orders and Packet of Letters from the Priests; however, he did it ignorantly, therefore obtained Mercy. If Dr. *Parr* and the rest of our Persecutors have thrown us into Goal in a Blind Zeal for their Religion, and Excommunicated us out of their Church because they believe us to be more *wicked, prophane* and *ungodly* then others that dwell within the Parish, we say, if it be so, their Sin is the less: but if it be upon the account of *Self-Interest* and *Enmity* (as is most probable) their Sin will be marked as with the Point of a Diamond, and it will be much if they find a Place of Repentance: let those concerned consider of it, before it be too late; for you must be accountable to God (if not to Men also) for your Actions; and let it not seem a light thing in your Eyes, to throw Persons into Goal, from their Wives, Families, Trades and Employments, for a thing

thing of nought, only call it *Contempt* to your *Ecclesiastical* Authority, when in time, it may yet appear, that we attending your Courts from time to time, and offering our Answers under our Hands and Seals by Proxy, was sufficient to prevent you of that fained pretence of *Contempt*, upon which you have unlawfully by your lying Lips Suplicated, Prayed, & gained a *Writ* against us, out of the King's Court of *Chancery*, but were never willing to let us have a fair Tryal, neither in your cruel Spiritual Court, nor at Common-Law; using Deceit and Lyes, as hath been hinted before to hinder us of a *prohibition*. The Law of *England* is very tender of the Liberties, Lives and Estates of Men, and when Justice takes place, some may be called to Account for their heady, rash, unlawful arbitrary Proceedings.

And seeing you know, or may know, that the Law is not on your sides, in your thus dealing with us, how is it that you are so hardy, and overgrown with Envy, as to give t^e Jaylor so strict a Charge concerning us, *That he must keep us close Prisoners, as if we were great Malefactors?* would it not please you well, if his Heart was as cruel towards us as yours, and that he would exercise as much Hardness of Heart, unlawful and unchristian Practices upon us in Prison, as you have done to bring us thither? It's hardly a Question whether some of you would not be glad if he would throng us together into some stinking Dungeon, where we might soon end our Dayes, and not live to see you mend, nor be rewarded according to your works.

But God be thanked, he hath so ordered and prepared the Minds and Hearts of many Jaylors in *England*, that they are ready to shew, and manifest Humanity, Favour and Kindness towards us, who suffer for Conscience-sake, and not for Evil doing.

It's said, (*Luke 10. 33.*) the *Samaritan* was more compassionate, or mercifull then the *Priest* and the *Levite*, and that, *Publicans* and *Harlots* go into the Kingdom of God, before the chief *Priests* and *Elders* of the people; this Christ *Matth. 21. 31.* said many Ages ago to the *Priest* and *Elders* then; and it is infallibly true in this Age, for the Hireling *Priest* who Persecutes for his Belly, and the *Elders* of the People, who are Cruel and Violent against

(40)
against their Neighbours about Church and
Worship; and the Lawyers who lay heavy bur-
thens upon the People; these shut up the Kingdom
of Heaven against men (now as then) and neither enter themselves,
nor suffer those that would.

And it is from these sort of Men that professe Law and
Religion, but practice neither, that Threatnings and Com-
plaints have been, and are made against some Jaylor, for beha-
ving themselves kindly towards us, their honest Prisoners, who
they can trust to go forth and buy themselves Bread and small
Bear, and other necessaries at the best hand, knowing they will
return again, according to their word. But the Envy of our Perse-
cutors, now they have thrown us in Prison from our Employments,
(being most poor Trades-men, and have but little Money) would
by threats and other means, ingage the Jaylor to abridge us of
that Liberty, or of any kindness he is capable to shew unto us. If
this be the Fruits of your Religion, and Spiritual-Courted men, and
the effect of *D. P.*'s teaching and Doctrine among you this many
Years, you will by this never win us to be of your Church, nor
to be in love with your Way nor Works. To conclude, we may
say of you, as Jacob said of his two Sons, *Simeon and Levi*, *You
are Brethren; Instruments of Cruelty are in your Habitations, Ob-
my Soul, come not than into their secret, unto their Assembly,* &c.
Gen. 49. 5.

*Joseph Rawbone
Henry Dey*

Page 29. line 14. for *Law* read *Love*. p. 34. l. 25. for *them* &
their Neighbour l. 24. for *nor* r. or. p. 35. l. 33. for *perverted* &
perverted. l. 35. for *trhough* r. *through*.

